

Choral Activities at MSU

2018-2019

Dear MSU Choral Conducting Alumni,

Welcome to our annual choral music newsletter, our effort to keep the members of the MSU choral family connected.

Introducing New Students

This year, we welcome three talented doctoral students. Liza Calisesi Maidens has returned to graduate school after several years of full time church work. She received her bachelor's degree from Central College in Iowa and her master's from Westminster Choir College and currently serves on the choral faculty at Eastern Michigan University. Connor Koppin comes to us after teaching at Valley High School in West Des Moines. His undergraduate degree is from Wartburg College in Iowa, and he received his MM through our summer program in 2017. W. Carter Smith holds undergraduate and master's degrees from Louisiana State University and taught high school in Baton Rouge for a number of years.

We also welcome two incoming master's students. Prior to joining us, Coty Raven Morris received her undergraduate degree from Texas State University and taught in the Houston area for a number of years. Kylie Ng comes to MSU from Hong Kong where she received her bachelor's degree from the Chinese University of Hong Kong and a postgraduate diploma in education from Hong Kong Baptist University. She was a full-time music teacher at the Diocesan Girls' Junior School.

We are happy to introduce four students who started our summer master's degree in 2018. Kelsi Edelen received a bachelor's degree from Western Kentucky University (where she studied with MSU alum Paul Hondorp). She teaches at Spencer County (Kentucky) Middle and High School. Matt Perez teaches at Cyprus Falls High School in the Houston area. He holds a bachelor's degree from Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas. Jacob Moore teaches at Hudson (Ohio) High School, and Brittany Von Stein teaches at Basalt (Colorado) High School. Both are graduates of Ohio State University, where they worked with MSU alums Robert Ward, Kristina MacMullen, and Andrea Ramsey.

Performance Highlights

The University Chorale performed at the Michigan ACDA Fall Conference on Friday, October 26. The program spotlighted works by MSU composers H. Owen Reed, Andrea Ramsey, Gerald Custer, and Brandon Ulrich.

On Saturday, December 9, the combined forces of Choral Union, Chorale and the MSU Symphony Orchestra performed Part I of *Messiah* and seasonal works by Bach, Holst, and Vaughan Williams.

On Saturday, February 23, Chorale will offer a complete performance of Palestrina's *Pope Marcellus Mass* at St. Mary Cathedral in Lansing. The performance will be repeated on Sunday, February 24, at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Grand Rapids.

On Sunday, April 7, the Choral Union, Chorale, and members of the MSU Symphony Orchestra will perform Vivaldi *Gloria* and Haydn *Lord Nelson Mass*.

On Saturday, April 27, State Singers and University Chorale, along with the MSU Symphony Orchestra, will perform movements from Charles Davidson's *I Never Saw Another Butterfly* and Shostakovich's epic Symphony #13 ("Babi Yar"). The Shostakovich program will feature faculty baritone Mark Rucker and will be repeated on Sunday, April 28, in Detroit's Orchestra Hall. Guest conductor Christopher Lees will lead both performances.

Guest Clinician

Andrew Crane served as our guest at the MSU Choral Invitational on October 29 where he worked with seven high school choirs from around the state of Michigan. In addition, he led master classes with some of our graduate conducting students and worked with the undergraduate conducting class.

Crane serves as conductor of the Brigham Young University Singers, who will appear at the ACDA national conference in Kansas City. He previously taught at East Carolina University and California State University-San Bernardino. He received his DMA in choral conducting from MSU and master's and undergraduate degrees from Brigham Young University.

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Spartans at ACDA National Conference

Congratulations to the following MSU alums who will appear at the ACDA national conference in Kansas City. Honor choir conductors: Sandra Snow, High School/ Collegiate SSAA Honor Choir and Derrick Fox, Middle School/Junior High SATB Honor Choir. Featured choirs: Ted Brimeyer, Urbandale Singers from Urbandale (Iowa) High School and Andrew Crane, Brigham Young University Singers. Lynda Hasseler will conduct the Capital University Chapel Choir in the premier performance of the Brock Commission, a new work by Jake Runestad. Presenters: Anton Armstrong (and Ryan Gossel, Gene Peterson, and Andrew Last), “The Lutheran Choral Tradition: Contributions by Weston Noble to the Modern Tradition”; Meredith Bowen, “unCONVENTional: Giving voice to the silenced (the music of cloistered nuns in 17th- and 18th-c. northern Italy)”; Joshua Palkki (with Matthew Garrett), “Honoring and validating transgender singers in a choral context I: Practical and pedagogical considerations”; Jonathan Palant, “Dallas Street Choir: The Impact of Communal Singing on Those Experiencing Homelessness.”

mirabai Young Scholars Program

During the summer of 2018, *mirabai*, under the direction of Sandra Snow, introduced the *mirabai* Young Scholars Program, which brought eight young women to MSU’s campus for a five-day immersive choral music experience.

The program, coordinated by *mirabai* member Alison Geesey, seeks to engage young women’s interest in pursuing a choral music career in their early years by providing significant role models of women working as conductors, singers, and composers. Thirty-five applicants from across the U.S. were considered for the eight slots. The participants received daily conducting and score study lessons, observed choral rehearsals, engaged in conversation with current *mirabai* members, and conducted the MSU Children’s Choir in conjunction with the Choral Music Experience Institute for Teacher Education, thus supporting *mirabai*’s mission of supporting equality among women in choral music.

Edward D. Anderson Fellowship

In 2017, Dr. Donald Anderson funded a fellowship for choral graduate students in memory of his late father, Edward D. Anderson, who passed away in July 2014, just two weeks shy of his 96th birthday. The elder Dr. Anderson received his master’s degree from Michigan State University and was the longtime director of choral activities at Colorado State University. This year’s recipient is doctoral student Clelyn Chapin. We are grateful to Dr. Anderson for his generosity and honored to help celebrate the musical legacy of his father.

Helen Bartlett Fellowship in Choral Music

Dr. Dale Bartlett, retired College of Music faculty member, MSU alum (BM ’55; MM ’56) and current conductor of the Lansing Arts Chorale, endowed a fellowship in memory of his late wife Helen, who was a longtime member of the Choral Union. This year’s recipient is doctoral student Carter Smith. Thank you, Dale!

Robert Harris Fellowship

Dr. Robert Harris, recently retired director of choral organizations at Northwestern University, a Michigan State alumnus (PhD ’71), and former MSU director of choral activities, continues to fund the Robert A. Harris Award for Excellence in Choral Performance to be given annually to an outstanding choral musician. This year’s recipients are doctoral students Clelyn Chapin and Carter Smith. Thank you, Bob!

Charles K. Smith Fellowship

The Charles K. Smith Endowed Fellowship in Choral Conducting, created upon Smith’s retirement in 2002 by members of the MSU Choral Society, provides important financial help to graduate students in choral conducting. This year’s recipient is doctoral student Clelyn Chapin. Thank you to the many donors who have contributed to this endowment over the years!

Choral Society Scholarships

Through dues and fundraising efforts, the Choral Society has provided scholarship support to over forty graduate students in choral conducting over thirty years. In 2018-19, the Choral Society provides funding assistance to doctoral students Clelyn Chapin and Carter Smith.



Keeping Up with MSU Alumni

This section of the newsletter is intended to help you keep up with the careers of your fellow MSU choral alums. Each year, the list of accomplishments becomes more impressive and demonstrates that our graduates are leaders in our profession. The list is obviously incomplete, so please contact me if you have recently changed jobs or want to share some aspect of your professional life in next year's newsletter. We particularly welcome information from those of who you received your degrees under the mentorship of Dr. Smith.

- **Patrick Baker**, MM '06, continues his work as fine arts coordinator in the Joliet (Illinois) Public Schools District 86. Under his leadership the program has grown from 21 to 36 teachers in three years, providing band, orchestra, and choir as electives and general music and visual art to all K-8 students. He is also working on an EdD from the University of Illinois.
- **Ryan Beeken**, MM '09, DMA '12, led the University Chorale of Indiana University of Pennsylvania in performances for conferences of ACDA's Eastern Region and the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association. His guest conducting engagements included the Male Changing Voice Honor Choir for the Central/North Central ACDA Region conference, the Florida All-State Male Choir, and A Cappella Abroad for Perform International in Prague and Vienna. He served as headliner for ACDA summer conferences in South Dakota and Oklahoma.
- **Chelsea Berner** completed her master's degree in spring 2018 and has taken a position as choral director at Ridge Point High School, Fort Bend Independent School District, Texas.
- **Ross Bernhardt**, DMA '97, was promoted to full professor at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, where he is entering his 11th year as director of choral activities. His composition for trombone and piano, "Coastal Bend Suite," was premiered at the International Trombone Festival this past summer, and his composition for mixed choir, "Salmo 23," was published in Spain by the Instituto Extremeño de Canto y Dirección Coral.
- **Meredith Bowen**, MM '06, DMA '16, is in her third year at Radford University in Virginia. She serves on the faculty of the Choral Music Experience Workshop held on the MSU campus and as vocal area coordinator for the residential Virginia Governor's School for the Visual and Performing Arts. Her article, "unCONVENTional Restoration: Giving Voice to the Silenced," was the featured article in the *Choral Journal* in February, and her edition of Sr. Sulpitia Cesis's "Stabat Mater" was published by Boosey & Hawkes. She will present on the same topic at the ACDA national conference in March. This past summer she participated in the ACDA International Exchange Program Fellowship to Kenya.
- **Meghan Boyd**, MM '12, DMA '16, was recently appointed director of choral activities at Xavier University in Cincinnati. She continues as associate director of Young Professionals Choral Collective.
- **Ted Brimeyer**, MM '10, will lead the Urbandale Singers from Urbandale (Iowa) High School in a performance at the ACDA national conference in Kansas City. The ensemble was the featured choir at Dorian Vocal Festival at Luther College in January 2018.
- **Matt Carlson** completed his MM this past summer and continues as director of choirs at Bermudian Springs High School, York Springs, Pennsylvania.
- **Zack Coles**, MM '16, has accepted a new position as choral director at Monarch High School in Louisville, Colorado, part of the Boulder Valley School District.
- **Alyssa Cossey**, DMA '17, is in her second year as a faculty member at the University of Arizona. Her article, "Adding Canons to the Canon: Franz Joseph Haydn's *Die Weltlichen Kanons*," was the featured article in the *Choral Journal* in August. She gave presentations at state music education conferences in New Mexico, California, and North Carolina, at the Midwest Clinic, and on the campuses of the University of California-Los Angeles and California State University-Fullerton.
- **Andrew Crane**, DMA '05, will conduct the Brigham Young University Singers in a performance at the ACDA national conference in Kansas City. During the past year he conducted the Georgia All-State TTBB Choir, served as headliner for the annual conference of the Choral Musicians Association of Hunan Province in China and as clinician for the

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Keeping Up with MSU Alumni (continued)

MSU Choral Invitational and Point Loma Nazarene College (San Diego) high school choral festival, and presented a session on choral/vocal pedagogy at the North Carolina Music Educators Association. He sang with Seraphic Fire at the Aspen Music Festival and with Santa Fe Desert Chorale during their Christmas program season.

- **Gerald Custer**, DMA '12, is in his 12th year on the theory and composition faculty at Wayne State University. In May, he was honored to be the first alumnus of Westminster Choir College invited to conduct at the school's annual commencement in Princeton. In December, his work for choir and chamber orchestra, "I will be the Light," was premiered in a nationwide radio and television broadcast by the youth choir and orchestra of RTE, the Irish National Broadcasting Service. His works continue to be performed throughout the country. In the fall, his setting of "Innisfree" was performed by the MSU University Chorale at Michigan ACDA, and last spring, his arrangement of "O Freedom" was premiered by the BYU Singers, conducted by Andrew Crane.
- **Zach Durlam**, DMA '10, conducted honor choirs and gave clinics in Wisconsin and Iowa and gave presentations on building choral tone at the combined North Central/Central regional conference of ACDA, at state music education and choral conferences in Illinois and Wisconsin, and for Show Choir Camps of America. He continues as director of choral activities at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.
- **Jess Edelbrock** completed her MM degree this past summer and continues her work as associate conductor and community outreach director for the Tucson Girls Chorus. She co-presented "The Process is the Product: Infusing Artistry from the First Read" with Dr. Marcela Molina at the 2018 AZMEA conference and "Pacing and Play: Keeping Singers Engaged" at this year's AZACDA student symposium.
- **Brett Epperson**, MM '17, led the Lincoln Lutheran Choir, a community-based ensemble, at the Nebraska Choral Directors Association summer conference in July 2018, where they premiered "Such Things," commissioned from MSU DMA student Connor Koppin. The Lincoln East High School Music Department, where he serves as director of choirs, received the Exemplary Program Award from the Nebraska Music Education Association. Fewer than ten schools or districts have been recognized with the award since its inception in 2000, and East is only the second large high school in Nebraska to be recognized with this honor.
- **Melissa Judge Elser**, MM '16, led the Vanguard School Singers, her non-audition high school choir, in a performance at the 2018 Colorado Music Educator's Clinic/Conference. They performed a work by current MSU DMA student, Connor Koppin.
- **Kelli Falls**, MM '03, teaches vocal music at Parker Middle School in Howell, Michigan. Last year she was named MSVMA Teacher of the Year. She continues to volunteer her time on the MSVMA Adjudication Committee and was instrumental in constructing the new JH/MS Rubrics. Kelli directs the Livingston County Chorale and the Hartland Messiah Chorus.
- **Elizabeth Fisher**, DMA '16, is teaching a variety of music courses at the University of Alabama-Birmingham and Samford University.
- **Tom FitzStephens**, MM '10, has begun PhD studies in Music Education at Georgia State University. He continues as a faculty member at the Performing Arts Conservatory of Atlanta and the Georgia Governor's Honors Program (Vocal Music).
- **Derrick Fox**, DMA '13, led the University of Nebraska-Omaha Concert Choir in a performance at the Nebraska Music Educators Association conference. He conducted the Men's Honor Choir for the Southwest ACDA Region conference and all-state choirs in New York and Kentucky and presented at state ACDA conferences in Kansas, Kentucky, New York, and Idaho. He did a residency at Syracuse University and at the Latvian Academy of Music, where he led the first concert of African American spirituals in the Academy's history. He is the author of *The Band Directors Guide to Teaching Choirs*, published by Carl Fischer and had octavos published by Hal Leonard and Brilee Publishing. He will conduct the Middle School/Junior High Honor Choir at the national ACDA conference in Kansas City.



- **Sarah Graham**, MM '03, DMA '05, conducted the Idaho All-State Mixed Choir and the Jefferson County (Colorado) High School Honor Choir this past year. She is director of choral activities at Lewis-Clark State College in Idaho.
 - **Tae Min Han**, MM '04, has accepted a position as director of music ministry at Central Reformed Church in Grand Rapids beginning in January 2019. Since 2010 he has held a similar position at First Presbyterian Church in Waterloo, Iowa. He, his wife, and daughter became U.S. citizens in 2017.
 - **Michael Hanawalt**, MM '09, has been appointed director of graduate choral activities at Florida State University beginning fall 2019.
 - **Lynda Hasseler**, MM '87, DMA '90, served on the international jurors panel for Sing Berlin! International Festival. She and the Capital University Chapel Choir and Choral Union, along with composer Jake Runestad, were awarded the 2018 American Prize's Ernst Bacon Memorial Award for the Performance of American Music. She presented a TED Talk for 2,000 high school musicians at the National Music For All Leadership Symposium. The talk received a Gold Pinnacle award for Best Miscellaneous Multimedia from the International Festival and Event Association Multimedia Awards. She will conduct the Chapel Choir in the premier performance of the Brock Commission, a new work by Jake Runestad, at the ACDA national conference.
 - **Zeb Highben**, DMA '12, led the Muskingum Concert Choir on a tour of the United Kingdom, including a performance in St. Paul's Cathedral, London. He contributed to Vol. 5 of *Teaching Music Through Performance in Choir* and won the 2018 Choral Composition Fellowship from the Greater Columbus Arts Council/Columbus Gay Men's Chorus. He was the featured clinician at the National Conference for Sacred Music, Augsburg Fortress Summer Music Clinics, and Concordia University Chicago's Lectures in Church Music.
 - **Stuart Chapman Hill**, PhD '16, is in his third year at Webster University in suburban St. Louis. This past year he conducted the honor choir for the Middle East South Asia Conference Senior Arts Festival at the American Embassy School in New Delhi, India.
- His article, "A sound approach: John Cage and music education," appeared in the *Philosophy of Music Education Review*, and he had two octavos published by Hinshaw Music. He conducts CHARIS, the St. Louis Women's Chorus, which was featured on an episode of "Ozzy & Jack's World Detour" with Ozzy Osbourne of Black Sabbath. (Who can compete with that?)
- **Paul Hondorp**, DMA '03, led the Western Kentucky University Chorale at the ACDA Southern Region conference last spring and in a tour of Costa Rica in May. Previously he participated in ACDA's International Conductors Exchange Program in Costa Rica.
 - **David Howard**, DMA '08, conducted the University of Oklahoma Women's Chorus at the Oklahoma Music Educators Association conference and served as interim director of choral activities at OU during spring 2018. He was bass soloist in Mozart's *Krönungsmesse*, K. 317 with the Filharmonia Gorzowska at the Szczecin (Poland) International Choral Festival in June.
 - **Dwight Jilek**, MM '13, was named artistic director of Magnum Chorum, a semi-professional ensemble based in Minneapolis in June of 2018. The ensemble performed at the 2018 Minnesota ACDA conference, and he presented "Soft Skills Within The Arts: Essential for the Workforce and Our Communities" at the same conference. He hosted composer Ēriks Ešēvalds for a three-day residency at Bemidji State University in March and toured with the Bemidji Choir to Latvia and Estonia in May. He and his wife welcomed their fourth child, Sigrid Anne, on June 19.
 - **Andrew Kreckmann**, MM '10, has begun a new position as director of choral activities and choral graduate studies at Sacramento State University. He completed a third summer on the conducting faculty of the Delaware Choral Symposium in Aix-en-Provence, France, and will return for a fourth season in 2019.
 - **Christine Le**, MM '15, led Bella Voce, her advanced treble ensemble from Orlando's Olympia High School, in a performance at the

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Keeping Up with MSU Alumni (continued)

Florida ACDA conference this past October. She is assistant director of the Garden Community Choir and Voci del Cuore, a new professional ensemble led by Jeffery Redding. She serves as co-chair for the high school division of the Orlando County Public Schools All-County Chorus.

- **Simon Lee**, DMA '10, continues as music and worship director at Holy Family Catholic Church in Grand Blanc. His wife Sia works as piano teacher and collaborative pianist at Oakland University.
- **Kristina MacMullen**, MM '09, led the Ohio State University Women's Glee Club in a performance at the Ohio Music Educators Association, conducted the Ohio Choral Directors summer honor chorus and honor choirs in Virginia, Texas, and North Carolina, and gave conference presentations in Utah and Alaska.
- **Marci Major**, MM '07, is chair and associate professor of music education at West Chester University of Pennsylvania, where she earned tenure and promotion in 2018. With colleague David Hedgecoth she published "Revisioning and Reinstating: Music Education after the Great Recession" in *Arts Education Policy Review* and gave research presentations with colleague Elizabeth Parker at American Educational Research Association and the ACDA Symposium on Research in Choral Singing. She also presented at the ACDA Eastern Region conference and Ohio and Pennsylvania Music Educators Associations, and conducted honors choirs in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maine.
- **David Mann** completed his MM in spring 2018, married his college sweetheart, Anna Kobylski, and accepted a position as choral director at Stonewall Jackson High School in Manassas, VA. In 2018 he was recognized for his graduate recital at MSU with the American Prize in Choral Conducting – Collegiate Division. In addition to conducting, David sings professionally in the Washington D.C. area, including the National Cathedral. He sang with the Oregon Bach Festival in 2018 and will return in summer 2019.
- **Andrew Minear**, DMA '17, led the University of Alabama University Singers in a performance at the Alabama Music Educators Association conference. He conducted all-state choirs in Mississippi and Georgia and honor choirs in Tennessee and Alabama. He also conducted high school choirs at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan and Over the Mountain Festivals in Alabama. He gave workshop sessions and conducted the youth choir for the Fellowship of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts National Music and Worship Arts Week in Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. He was recently appointed Associate Editor of *The Choral Scholar*, the journal of the National Collegiate Choral Organization.
- **Matthew Olson**, MM '09, serves as visiting director of choirs at Carleton College, artistic director of Oratory Bach Ensemble, and assistant conductor of The Singers in Minneapolis-St. Paul. He served as chorus master for the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra's performances and recording of Bach's *St. John Passion* and led performances of Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles* with The Singers—Minnesota Choral Artists and Brahms' *German Requiem* with Magnum Chorum. He also presented on democratic rehearsal methodology at ACDA-MN and led high school honors choirs in Minnesota and Wisconsin.
- **Jonathan Palant**, DMA '07, serves as director of choral activities at the University of Texas at Dallas and as conductor of the nationally recognized Dallas Street Choir, which was featured at the TCDA summer conference and will perform at the ACDA national conference in Kansas City. Over the past year he lectured and guest conducted in Florida, Georgia, Indiana, and Washington, D.C.
- **Josh Palkki**, PhD '16, continues his research on issues surrounding LGBTQ high school singers and their teachers. He has published an article in *Research Studies in Music Education* and given presentations at the ACDA Symposium on Research in Choral Singing, NAFME Music Research and Teacher Education conference and the California All-State Music Education conference. He is in his 3rd year as a faculty member at California State University-Long Beach.
- **Clayton Parr**, MM '89, DMA '90, conducted the Blue Lake International Choir on a three-week European tour; performed at the Michigan ACDA fall conference with Michigan Educators Male Ensemble; and presented a paper on choral



multiculturalism at the International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony in Tbilisi, Georgia. He serves as director of choral activities at Albion College.

- **Ryan Person**, MM '13, completed his DMA in choral conducting from Texas Tech University in May 2018 and was appointed director of choral activities at Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa.
- **Eric Rubinstein**, MM '12, was recently appointed lecturer of choral music education at the Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College (CUNY), where he conducts the Treble Choir and teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in music education. He is completing a DMA in choral conducting with a minor in music education from Louisiana State University.
- **Karen Salvador**, MM '07, PhD '11, continues as associate professor of music education at the University of Michigan-Flint. This past summer she concluded her term as president of the Michigan Music Education Association and began her term as president-elect of NAFME's North Central Division. She serves on the board of the Early Childhood Music and Movement Association and helped the Early Childhood Special Research Interest Group write a new position statement on Early Childhood Music Education. She published articles in the National Teacher Education Journal and Research Studies in Music Education as well as state journals and blogs in Wisconsin, Connecticut, Missouri, Delaware, and Michigan.
- **Jennifer Sengin** completed her DMA in 2018 and accepted a position as associate director of choral activities at Georgia State University in Atlanta. Jennifer also serves as director of music at Druid Hills Presbyterian Church and as the R&R chair for Youth and Student Activities for the Georgia ACDA. She is the artistic administrator for MSU's *mirabai* ensemble and the administrator of the Choral Music Experience workshop at MSU. She presented at the Michigan School Vocal Music Association summer conference, ACDA Central/North Central Division conference, Michigan Music Conference, and Iowa Music Educators Association conference.
- **Daniel Singer**, MM '11, was recently named assistant director of choruses for the Cleveland Orchestra and director of the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Chorus. He has been director of music at Cleveland's University School since 2011 where he conducts high school chorus and orchestra.
- **Brigitte Smith**, MM '15, is associate director of choirs at San Marcos High School in San Marcos, Texas, and an active clinician and adjudicator who also works with TCDA's mentor program for new teachers. She is a founding member of the Purgatory Creek Chorale, a professional choir based in the Hill Country area of Texas. "Other than that," she writes, "I play the role of wife to my band director husband, and I am a busy mom to a rambunctious two-year old and sixteen-year old high school junior who is involved in all things musical."
- **Bonnie Borshay Sneed**, DMA '90, serves on the faculty of McLennan Community College in Waco, TX. She recently led a performance of Arvo Pärt's *Berliner Messe* with the MCC Chorale and Collegium Orchestra.
- **McKenna Stenson** completed her master's degree this past summer and continues as director of choirs at Charles J. Colgan High School, Manassas, Virginia.
- **Lydia Stout** completed her master's degree last spring and returned to Chicago. She is assistant director of the Youth Choral Theater of Chicago, where she directs or co-directs four children's choirs, spanning an age range of 2.5 to 21 years old. As the Children's Music Director at the Glenview Community Church, she directs two children's choirs, the Intergenerational Choir, and collaborative projects with the Joyful Ringers and the Chancel Choir. She and her husband, Oliver, were married in August.
- **Bridget Sweet**, MM '03, PhD '08, was awarded tenure and promotion to associate professor at the University of Illinois in May.
- **Bryce Thompson**, MM '16, commissioned a work from MSU alum and current DMA student, Connor Koppin. His choir at Lake Orion (Michigan) Community High School performed with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in December. He represents MSVMA as director of the Michigan Youth Arts Festival and serves

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on the ACDA-MI board of directors. He and his wife welcomed a baby girl this fall, the perfect addition to their four boys!

- **Joel Tranquilla**, DMA '13, is in his fifth year as director of choral activities at Trinity Western University in Langley, British Columbia (just outside of Vancouver). He is also artistic director of the Valley Festival Singers and the award-winning Coastal Sound Youth Choir. In February, the TWU Chamber Choir toured China, singing in Beijing and Hong Kong, among other cities. Joel also serves as the associate conductor of the Canadian Chamber Choir. Joel and his wife, Meghan have a 3-year-old son, Everett and welcomed a baby girl, Penelope, into the family this past June.
- **Frank Watkins**, DMA '16, toured Central Europe with two of his choirs from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and led the UW-EC Concert Choir in a performance at the fall conference of the Wisconsin Music Educators Association. This past summer he completed his second research trip to Senegal.
- **Brent Wells**, DMA '07, continues as associate professor and director of choral Activities at the College of Idaho and musical director for the community arts organization, Treasure Valley Millennial Choirs and Orchestra. He sang with the Santa Fe Desert Chorale for their winter season. Two of his arrangements were published by Walton and earthsongs.
- **Brandon Williams**, DMA '16, is in his 3rd year on the faculty at Rutgers University. He published "The Shadow Still Lingers: A Conductor's Guide for William Grant Still's *And They Lynched Him on a Tree*, the featured article in the *March Choral Journal* and presented on the work at the Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities. He conducted honor choirs in Texas, Pennsylvania, New York, Alaska, Alabama, Virginia, and New Jersey and gave conference presentations on rehearsal techniques at the New Jersey Music Educators Association conference and the Georgia ACDA Georgia summer conference. Hal Leonard Publications published four of his choral arrangements.
- **Tamara (Grove) Williams**, MM '14, continues as director of choirs at Traverse City's Central High School. Her choirs have performed recently at the ACDA-Michigan conference, the Michigan Music Conference choral hour, and the Michigan Youth Arts Festival and have toured to San Antonio, New York, Washington D.C., Chicago, Toronto, Salzburg, Vienna, Estonia, Latvia, Munich and Prague. She was the 2017 SATB MSVMA Honors Choir Director at the Michigan Music Conference.
- **Robert Williams**, MM '16, is choral director at Liberty High School in North Liberty, Iowa. He and his wife, Dana, celebrated the birth of their first child, Victoria Rose, on September 1.
- **Henry Windham III**, MM '16, teaches choir and AP music theory at I.H. Kempner High School in Sugar Land, Texas and works as a staff singer/cantor at St. Theresa Catholic Church in Sugar Land. This past summer he served on the faculty of the new Fort Bend ISD Kodaly Institute. He was married on July 14 in his hometown of Detroit.

